GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2031
ANSWERED ON:13.03.2007
SURVEY ON LANGUAGES
Singh Kunwar Rewati Raman

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to conduct a survey to ascertain the languages of various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether according to earlier findings 220 languages are spoken in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT(SMT. D. PURANDESWARI)

(a) & (b) Yes, Sir. There is a proposal to conduct a Linguistic Survey of the country, the report of which will be available after 10 years of its commissioning. The proposed survey aims at providing a systematic and comprehensive account of the status of Indian language diversity, multilingualism, interlingual relationships, and dynamics of language. To do so, it will exploit advances in technology to document, prepare databases of different kinds, corpora of spoken and written varieties and produce a wide range of linguistic materials in both print and electronic form.

(c) & (d) As per Census 1991, there are 114 languages in the country. 216 mother tongues, each of which is spoken by 10,000 or more people, are listed under these languages. The 216 mother tongues together are spoken by nearly 99% of the population and belong to four language families namely Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austro Asiatic and Tibeto-Burman.